

Brushy Creek Trail Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
October 17, 2006

Tour at 4 p.m. Participants in a tour of the Lake Trail included Chad Kelchen, Greg Van Fosson, Mike Tinkham, Pat Reed, Kristi Schaaf, Myron Groat, Donna Christensen Nick Salmon, and Mike and Lori Lange.

Meeting at 6 p.m. Board members present included Ruth Nellesen, Mike Tinkham, Kristi Schaaf, Pat Reed, Myron Groat, Donna Christensen, Chad Kelchen and Kevin Szcodronski. Also present were Amber O'Neill, Steve Bell, Greg Van Fosson, Erin Meehan, Mike Lange, Lori Lange and Nick Salmon.

Minutes from the April 18, 2006 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Officer elections took place. The board unanimously voted Ruth Nellesen as chairperson and Chad Kelchen as secretary.

Chad updated the group on current park issues. Approximately 1/3 of the lake trail project is complete. Trail users riding off to the side of the rock is a problem. Any sections of all weather trail connecting to the regular trail system have now been top coated with 3/8 minus material. Unless there is extra money available, the rest of the lake trail will not be top-coated.

On May 8, 2006 Brushy Creek experienced major flood damage from a storm that dropped 4-5 inches of rain in about one hour. Park staff made the necessary repairs, some only temporary, and within 10 days were able to reopen the trail system. The Executive Council approved approximately \$30,000 to be spent on flood damage repairs, which are complete at this time.

The reservation system went fairly smoothly for the first year and worked out well for holiday weekends.

Greg jumped in to give an update on the proposed changes to Administrative Rule 571; chapter 51 and 67. There was a short discussion of how these changes affect Brushy Creek and other areas. The proposed rule changes will have little effect on Brushy Creek's trails.

The emerald ash borer is a serious threat heading our way. More than 15 million ash trees are dead or dying in Michigan. The natural spread of this exotic beetle is about 1 mile/year; however it can easily be unknowingly transported in firewood. The Iowa DNR is asking that out of state campers not bring firewood in and likewise if Iowans travel out of state, do not bring unused firewood back. The effect of the emerald ash borer will be similar, but much worse, to that of Dutch Elm disease.

Messenger Printing has finished the latest trail map which features GPS mapped trails overlaid on an aerial photo.

This year pop can collection sites were placed in all 3 campgrounds in order to raise money for various projects or equipment needs at Brushy Creek. A campground host has volunteered to be in charge of the collection and approximately \$600 was raised this year.

Camping revenue for 2006 is \$10,000 higher than 2005, setting a new all-time high. The number of reported individuals was slightly down, but the number of guest days (which factors in how many

nights each individual camps) was up. This demonstrates a trend of people taking longer camping trips.

An item under old business was accidentally skipped over, which was discussion on TAB legislative appointments. Donna believes that by eliminating the legislative appointments the group is missing an opportunity to keep in touch with their legislators who need to know what is going on and what is needed for funding in this area. All agreed with the need to stay in contact with legislators, but have had difficulties getting responses in the past. The group voted 4 – 0 (with 1 abstention, Donna) to proceed with changing the legislative-appointed process to appointments made by the Natural Resources Commission. Kevin brought up the idea of having a picnic or potluck event where the TAB invites local legislators to get to know them and give them an idea of what's going on at Brushy. Everyone thought this was a good idea and will proceed with planning something for next fall.

Greg told the group we have a new TAB member from the State Preserves Board, Deborah Lewis, who could not make it to the meeting.

The playground equipment for the beach campground will be ordered this fall and hopefully put in place in the spring. Cabin development at Brushy has taken a change of course. The cooperative effort with Iowa Central Community College to produce camper cabins will not be feasible. New avenues for cabin development are currently being pursued.

Greg introduced Erin Meehan, who is a permanent naturalist shared by the Webster County Conservation Board and the DNR (Brushy Creek and Dolliver). She described some of the programs she has been doing and asked the group for horse-related ideas for informational kiosk posters and programs.

The next TAB meeting will take place March 27, 2007 at 6 p.m. Planning for a legislative picnic will be the main topic on the agenda. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30.